

ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

2011

DRY FORK RIDGE C&H ALLOTMENT

LOWER DRY FORK C&H ALLOTMENT

LAKE CREEK C&H ALLOTMENT

AND

LITTLE HORN C&H ALLOTMENT

MEDICINE WHEEL/PAINTROCK

AND

TONGUE DISTRICTS

BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST

Clarke McClung
District Ranger

Date

Permittee

Date

DRY FORK RIDGE, LOWER DRY FORK, LAKE CREEK, AND LITTLE HORN
 C&H ALLOTMENTS
 2011 ANNUAL OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

A. Before Entering the Allotment

1. Review all clauses of your term grazing permit and the information contained within these Annual Operating Instructions (AOI). Be sure to contact David, Zach or Tyler if you have questions or any portion of your grazing permit or these operating instructions is not clearly understood.
2. The current year's grazing fees must be paid before placing livestock on the National Forest.
3. Review Section G. - Maintenance of Improvements, and complete the necessary maintenance of assigned range improvements as described in that section.

1. Entering and Leaving the Allotment

The on-date for all the allotments has been tentatively set for July 1st. The actual date will be dependent upon forage development. Like the past 2-3 years, the month of June has started out with cool temperatures so it will be very important to watch the plant growth in your allotment to determine if there will be adequate forage available when livestock enter. We will be monitoring vegetative conditions as well and unless notified by a Forest Officer that a delay will be necessary, you may plan to place livestock on the allotment on the entry date shown on your 2011 Bill for Collection.

C. Authorized Numbers and Pasture Rotation

Permittee	Authorized Livestock Numbers	Authorized Season of Use *
Dana & Alice Kerns	200 Mature	7/14-7/15
	200 Mature	7/15-10/03
	40 Horses	7/14-10/10
	40 Mature	7/01-7/31
	100 Mature	7/13-8/15
	175 Yearlings	7/01-7/31
	100 Yearlings	7/13-7/31
Krayton & Druann Kerns	Non-Use	

* The authorized numbers and season of use shown are for the combined use of the Little Horn, Dry Fork Ridge/Lower Dry Fork and Lake Creek allotments. The authorized season of use has been adjusted so the season is the same for both allotments to accommodate the planned pasture rotation and allow for intensive grazing management on all allotments.

Pasture Sequence	Allotment	Pasture Name
First Herd & Second Herd *		
1	Lower Dry Fork	Lower
2	Lower Dry Fork	Double Springs
3	Lake Creek	Lake Creek
4	Lake Creek	Lick Creek
Pasture Sequence	Allotment	Pasture Name
Third Herd *		
1	Little Horn	Parks
2	Lake Creek	Bear Trap
3	Lake Creek	Lick Creek

* Plans are to trail cattle up the canyon in three herds using paid clientele authorized under an outfitter guide permit. The first herd consisting of 200 yearlings will be trailed to the Lower pasture in Lower Dry Fork allotment on July 1st. The second herd consisting mostly of 200 cow-calf pairs will trail to the Double Springs pasture of Lower Dry Fork allotment on July 14th and incorporating the first bunch of cattle into the herd on the way through the allotment. The third herd consisting of approximately 150 cow-calf pairs will be trailed to the Little Horn allotment on July 14th. The herd from Lower Dry Fork and the herd from Lake Creek will eventually combine in the Lick Creek pasture of Lake Creek allotment before they are trailed off the mountain. Livestock will also be trailed off the Forest in two herds but it will be necessary to make the trail from the Lick Creek pasture without stopping in the Parks. The first herd consisting mainly of yearlings will be trailed off around 9/10-9/14. The remaining cattle will be trailed off the mountain around the end of September. Plans are to not use the Dry Fork Ridge allotment or the Cow Camp pasture in Lower Dry Fork allotment.

This planned pasture rotation outlines the pasture sequence we have discussed for the 2011 grazing season. You are encouraged to use adaptive management practices (e.g. use of temporary electric fence, use of riders and low stress handling techniques, combination of allotments, etc.) to help meet the allowable use requirements described in Sections D and E below. We encourage you to consider management adjustments for your allotment that would make meeting these guidelines easier for your operation. To assure your management does not negatively affect other resources, all proposed changes to these instructions must be discussed with and approved by David, Zach or Tyler prior to implementation on the ground.

D. Allowable Use/Herbage Left Guidelines

The allowable use/herbage left guidelines are designed to ensure that short-term effects of livestock grazing activities are within established parameters intended to provide for the long-health and sustainability of rangeland resources. The two general approaches used to measure actual use to determine if the guidelines were met are residual herbage left and utilization.

Residual herbage left methods: This is expressed as the amount of herbage left after livestock grazing and includes methods such as stubble height and visual obstruction methods (Robel pole).

Utilization methods: This is expressed as the amount of forage removed by grazing or trampling and includes methods such as paired plots and ocular estimates.

The following allowable use/herbage left guidelines will apply to all areas of your allotment. Total use by livestock and wildlife combined must not exceed any of these guidelines at the time livestock leave a pasture.

1. Upland Range Sites

Sites on sedimentary soils below 9,200 feet elevation (Excludes sites dominated by timothy and smooth brome)	Visual Obstruction Reading (VOR) of 5 or more bands for all applicable sites (readings of 4 bands or more acceptable).
All Other Sites (such as sites dominated by timothy and smooth brome, are located on granitic soils, or above 9200 feet elevation)	A. Maximum of 40% by weight in all pastures used prior to August 1 st . B. Maximum of 50% by weight in pastures used after August 1 st .

2. Riparian Range Sites

Herbaceous vegetation on all sites except areas suitable for water vole habitat.	A. A residual 5" stubble height on wide leaved carex species if livestock leave pasture prior to August 1st.* B. A residual 7" stubble height on wide leaved carex species if livestock leave pasture after August 1st.*
Willows	Maximum of 35% use of current years leaders by livestock.

3. Aspen Range Sites

Herbaceous vegetation within all aspen stands	A. 5" stubble height for all grasses and sedges when livestock leave a pasture*
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* All stubble height guidelines stated for riparian and aspen range sites are the minimum required when transect measurements record the longest leaf length of all leaves readily available for livestock grazing for each plant measured. Leaves or portions of leaves trampled in the mud, lying on the ground or in water, protected by willows or otherwise unavailable to livestock are not to be included in the measurements. Transect measurements may also record the average length of all leaves available for grazing from each selected plant. If the average leaf method is used, all minimum guidelines shown in tables above will be adjusted downward 1".

Livestock must be moved to the next pasture or off the National Forest if in the last pasture when further use will exceed one or more of the allowable use/herbage left guidelines shown above. It is your responsibility to manage your livestock within each pasture to assure use does not exceed any of the above guidelines. This will require constant monitoring of the vegetation by you and/or your allotment rider and not just simply waiting for estimated calendar dates to determine the proper use period for each pasture. It is imperative you take whatever steps are necessary (use of riders, move salt weekly, reduction in total numbers, shorten length of grazing periods in pastures, etc.) to manage your livestock to assure all guidelines are met throughout each pasture.

It is also important to note the allowable use/herbage left guidelines shown above apply to all suitable range (riparian and uplands) within the allotment. To assist you with your responsibilities of monitoring the actual use, all monitoring measurements will be done using a key area concept. The key areas are generally those areas livestock have the tendency to graze first when placed in a pasture. Livestock also tend to graze these areas repeatedly. As a result, these areas will typically reach the allowable use/herbage left guidelines before any other area of the pasture. If actual use in these key areas does not exceed the allowable use/herbage left guidelines, then use in the rest of the pasture will most likely not exceed guidelines either (unless livestock are constantly pushed off the key areas to other portions of the pasture). The important thing to remember is actual use should not exceed any of the guidelines throughout the pasture and if our management causes a change in use patterns we may need to discuss a change in key area boundaries.

E. Monitoring

You are strongly encouraged to complete spot checks of all key areas, both upland and riparian portions, on a regular basis while livestock are in the allotment(s) to help you plan when moves should occur instead of waiting until after you leave and finding use is beyond allowable use guidelines. I have enclosed copies of the stubble height data forms to assist you with your monitoring of sedges in riparian areas. Any forms submitted to our office will be placed in the allotment monitoring folder.

If you decide to submit stubble height data, I recommend you read enough stubble height transects to obtain a representative sample of the residual leaf length of the dominant sedges. The number of transects you need to read will depend on the size of the area and the variances of use levels within the area. One transect may be sufficient in narrow riparian areas where use does not vary across the entire area. Two or more may be necessary in larger riparian areas if you detect utilization varies significantly within 3 feet of the water's edge compared to the remainder of the area. Photos of the transect, and its general location, are helpful to substantiate your documentation. The Forest Service will also be conducting spot checks and transect measurements of key areas throughout the grazing season to verify guidelines are being met.

F. Key Areas:

Properly selected key areas give an indication of the overall acceptability of current grazing management to meet all resource objectives. These areas may be moved or redefined in future years if monitoring results indicate a change is necessary. The following is a list of the key areas:

Lower Dry Fork C&H Allotment

Lower Pasture:

1. Area east of Little Bighorn River in sections 30 and 31 dominated by aspen and ninebark.
2. Area extending 1/4 mile north of fence separating the Lower/Middle pasture fence.
3. Open park surrounding ninebark and bluegrass area in northwest 1/4 of Section 6.

Middle Pasture:

1. An area extending in a 0.25 mile radius of all seep areas within the open park known as Double Springs.
2. Open park and creek drainage in vicinity of Beer Springs (N1/2, section 27).

Cow Camp Pasture:

1. Open parks between cow camp and pasture fence separating the Middle and Cow Camp pastures.
2. Open parks, including aspen stands, on south facing slope north and east of cow camp.

Dry Fork Ridge C&H Allotment

1. Open park between rain trap (#549) and the cow camp.
2. Open park located north of Road #114 in Section 15.
3. Open park west of and including the creek drainage upstream of stock tank #471.

Lake Creek C&H Allotment

Lake Creek Pasture:

1. An area beginning at the Dayton Gulch road and extending approximately 1/2 mile south (upstream) of the Dayton Gulch road and lying between Forest System Road (FSR) #142 and the timber on the east side of the of Lake Creek/Ice Creek divide.
2. An area 400 yards either side of Lake Creek beginning at the Dayton Gulch road and extending north (downstream) to that point on Lake Creek commonly known as "the Narrows".

Lick Creek Pasture:

1. An area 0.25 mile either side of Lick Creek beginning 1/4 mile south (upstream) of the Dayton Gulch road and extending downstream to where the valley narrows and becomes timbered north (downstream) of the fish exclosures.
2. An area 0.25 mile either side of Dayton Gulch Creek within the open meadows in section 13 and 18.

Bear Trap Pasture:

1. An area 200 yards either side of the upper reaches of Taylor Creek above tank #470 in section 35. This key area will be reevaluated this year and a new one may be designated.
2. The open, uplands parks within Section 7 that lies adjacent to FSR #148 and north of the Lick Creek/Bear Trap pasture drift fence.

Little Horn C&H Allotment

East Burnt Pasture:

1. 300 yards on either side of both drainages flowing into the Little Bighorn River SE1/4 Section 1, T56N, R91W, and SW1/4 Section 33, T57N, R90W.

Parks Pasture:

1. An area within 300 yards on all sides of East Side Water Development.
2. An area within 300 yards on all sides of Little Horn Parks Water Development.

G. Maintenance of Improvements

Part 2, Clause 8(i) of your term grazing permit states "...the permittee will maintain all range improvements, whether private or Government owned, that are assigned for maintenance to standards of repair, orderliness, and safety acceptable to the Forest Service". A complete list of the improvements and designated maintenance responsibility is included in Part 3 of your term grazing

permit. The initial maintenance of each improvement must be completed prior to the time livestock enter the pasture in which the improvement is located each year or in the case of allotment boundary fences prior to livestock entering the pasture on either side of the fence. For many improvements, maintenance will be on going and will require additional attention after livestock enter the pasture. The minimum maintenance required will be as follows:

Springs: All tanks are to be level, completely surrounded by dry ground and easily accessible by both cows and calves. The inlet and overflow pipes are to be free of crimps or breaks, completely buried or otherwise protected from livestock and capable of delivering water to and away from tanks without any water spilling in the immediate vicinity (20-30 ft.) of the tank. Livestock barriers over tanks must be sturdy and all poles and planks must be in good condition and nailed/bolted in place.

Wire Fences: Fences are to be in an upright, vertical position with all broken wires repaired, wires tight and properly spaced and all corner posts, braces, line posts, steel posts, stays, loops, staples, etc. replaced as needed. Wire spacing may be adapted to the needs of each fence but the bottom wire should be 16-18" off the ground and the top wire must be no higher than 42" above the ground. Gates are to be tight enough to prevent sagging but must be able to be easily opened and closed by the general public.

Buck and Pole Fences: Fences must be in an upright, serviceable position. Bucks that are spreading and lowering the overall height of the fence must be stabilized with a bottom brace or replaced. All poles must be nailed to bucks and all broken or rotting poles and bucks are to be replaced.

H. Neighboring Allotment Rotations

The rotations for the neighboring allotments are being provided to give you an idea of when livestock may be adjacent to any allotment boundary fences you are responsible for maintaining. Please remember the dates shown are approximate dates only and those permittees will be monitoring use to determine when the actual moves will occur.

Wyoming Gulch C&H 7/06-9/30

1. Bald Mountain/Rooster Hill
2. Half Ounce

Little Horn C&H – Fuller Rotation 7/01-9/25

1. Lower Little Horn
2. Horse
3. West Burnt
4. Trail East
5. Trail West
6. Horse
7. Little Horn

I. Range Improvement Projects

As discussed in our recent meeting, the following range improvement projects are planned for the 2011 grazing season.

1. Improvement and maintenance on the cow camp of Lower Dry Fork C&H allotment. Permittee plans to construct a lean-to on the cabin and remove existing sauna. Permittee will provide the materials and labor for improvements on the cow camp cabin.

2. A temporary electric fence will be constructed for a horse pasture in the Cow Camp pasture of Lower Dry Fork C&H. Materials for the electric fence will be furnished by the Forest Service and permittee will provide labor/equipment to install the improvement.

J. Salting Practices:

The proper use of salt can be used as a good management tool to help you achieve proper utilization. The following are guidelines that should be used when placing salt on your allotment. If you feel your management situation requires changes in these guidelines please contact David or Zach to discuss.

1. Scatter salt in its proper location prior to livestock entering the pasture.
2. Salt should be placed between water developments and at least 1/4 mile from water if at all possible. Salting near water just encourages cattle to stay nearby and should seldom be practiced.
3. Salt away from small parks, trails, roads and areas of concentrated public use. Salt should be placed in areas of rock outcrops, mature timber (other than aspen), or areas of dense sagebrush where the general public will not easily see it.
4. Change your salt location at least every year and preferably every time salt is placed within a pasture. Moving salt blocks 50-100 feet can prevent an area from becoming abused from salt placement year after year. Placing salt in areas of dense sage and changing location every 2-3 weeks or yearly (depending on length of grazing period) is an effective way to use cows to control sagebrush over small areas or create small pockets of grass within large areas dominated by sage.
5. Remove salt from an area when actual use in the nearby vicinity is approaching the allowable use standard. Livestock must be moved to the next pasture when proper use is reached.

ACTUAL USE RECORD - 2011

TONGUE R.D. DRY FORK RIDGE, LOWER DRY BIGHORN NATIONAL FOREST
 FORK, LAKE CREEK, AND
 LITTLE HORN ALLOTMENTS

ACTUAL USE

Pasture	Number of Cattle	Date on Pasture	Date off Pasture

Losses: Numbers by age class and possible cause (Poison, natural or predator).

Allotment Operating Cost:

Labor costs:

Rider _____
 Improvement Maintenance _____
 Water _____
 Fence _____
 Other _____
 Improvement Construction _____
 Water _____
 Fence _____
 Other _____
 Salt _____

Transportation Cost _____
 Horse Maintenance _____

Permittee signature _____ Date _____

PLEASE ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR NOTES YOU WISH TO PLACE IN THE PERMANENT ALLOTMENT FILE.